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Allergy and Environmental Health Association - Ottawa Branch - P.O. Box 33023, Nepean, Ontario K2C 3Y9

The Honourable Ruth Grier,
Ontario Minister of Health,
Queen's Park, Toronto. M7A 2C4

21 April 1993

FAX: (416) 326-1571 voice: (416) 327-4520 ATT: Mary Lewis, Executive Assistant to the Minister

Dear Mrs. Grier,

Please pass on our thanks to your Executive Assistant, Mary Lewis, for time spent on the phone with me. Even a few moments are precious considering her responsibilities. However, it was my unpleasant task to indicate to her that Ministry staff are not yet acknowledging the concern raised. They are not yet acknowledging the continuing, arbitrary and very damaging nature of abuse by physicians. Abuse has cost everybody more than the absence of medical treatment.

They must acknowledge the abuse, and they must move to prevent its previously described ongoing consequences. There are issues more serious and not dependent on improved medical understanding. It would help if Ministry staff understood what you and the Deputy Attorney General most certainly know, that it violates more basic traditions to use a medical model when discussing human rights.

We are being wronged by your Ministry. Apparently, doctors have too little training in ethics and too much influence in the Ministry if citizens can be objectified so extremely in policy, in service delivery, and in the political process. We do not exist as a function of medicine. Our experience is not based on theory. The Ministry's approach to attitude problems, through science, is fundamentally offensive.

We do not need proof that an African-Canadian deserves protection under the law. We do not need proof that a woman can understand engineering. We do not need proof of the trustworthiness of a Jew. Or the intelligence of the deaf. Why do we question the personal integrity and credibility of persons disabled by sensitivities, who "may" experience reactions as you "might" feel someone stand on your foot?

At any given time environmental sensitivities have been recognized by enough authorities, had been experienced for enough generations, and had been written about in the literature long enough, by people with enough letters behind their names, and (more recently) our rights defended by enough leaders in Ontario and Canadian officialdom, that questions of integrity based on our having the disability, bringing into doubt on the basis of a prohibited ground our ability to know when we know something and when we do not, have been at best arbitrary. Ever.

Consequences make it extremely serious constructive discrimination on the basis of a prohibited ground.

The important concern is stop the abuse. For this reason alone the abuse must be acknowledged. It is true that justice without healing is not justice. But it is also true that hearing the truth spoken about abuse is essential to personal, social, and spiritual recovery, and to end the ongoing tragedy.

Sincerely,
Chris Brown - Ottawa Branch President
(705) 658-4649 (temporary)